

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 R

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APPROVED BY EA/VN:RHWENZEL

S/S -JPMOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 236790

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, VS, US

SUBJ: PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT THIEU

THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER TO
PRESIDENT THEIU DATED OCTOBER 24.

BEGIN TEXT

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I VERY MUCH APPRECIATED MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BAC
AND RECEIVING FROM HIM YOUR LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 19.

AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD VIETNAM REMAINS UNCHANGED UNDER
THIS ADMINISTRATION. WE CONTINUE STRONGLY TO SUPPORT
YOUR GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO DEFEND AND TO PROMOTE THE
INDEPENDENCE AND WELL-BEING OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE.
WE ALSO REMAIN CONFIDENT IN THE COURAGE, DETERMINATION AND
SKILL OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND ARMED FORCES.

I FULLY UNDERSTAND AND SHARE YOUR CONCERN ABOUT THE CURRENT
SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, PARTICULARLY THE
GROWING COMMUNIST MILITARY THREAT WHICH YOU NOW FACE.

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I AM ALSO WELL AWARE OF THE CRITICAL NECESSITY OF AMERICAN

MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID FOR YOUR COUNTRY. I GIVE YOU MY

FIRM ASSURANCE THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO
MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PROVIDE THE ASSISTANCE YOU NEED.

ALTHOUGH I WOULD WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH YOU
TO DISCUSS WAYS AND MEANS TO ACHIEVE A GENUINE AND LASTING
PEACE IN SOUTH VIETNAM, PRIOR COMMITMENTS PRECLUDE SUCH A
MEETING AT THIS TIME. BUT I HOPE THAT SUCH A MEETING
CAN BE ARRANGED IN THE FUTURE.

I AGREE WITH YOU THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT MY GOVERNMENT
CLEARLY INDICATE ITS SUPPORT FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT AND FOR
THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. I
BELIEVE MY PUBLIC STATEMENT OF OCTOBER 9, MY MEETING
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BAC AND DEPUTY DEFENSE SECRETARY
CLEMENT'S VISIT TO SAIGON ALL CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT
WE ARE STANDING FIRM IN OUR COMMITMENTS TO YOU. WE
HAVE ALSO CONVEYED TO OTHER POWERS HAVING AN INTEREST IN
VIETNAM THAT WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT YOUR GOVERNMENT
AND THAT WE FAVOR A COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS
AGREEMENTS. I SHALL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OTHER OCCASIONS
TO SHOW MY SUPPORT FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT AND FOR THE PEACE
THAT WE ACHIEVED TOGETHER.

OUR COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN THROUGH MANY DIFFICULT TIMES
TOGETHER. IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT WE SHALL FACE OTHER
DIFFICULTIES IN THE FUTURE. I AM CONFIDENT, HOWEVER,
THAT THESE PROBLEMS CAN BE OVERCOME IF WE WORK TOGETHER
TO MEET THEM WITH STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION.

WITH BEST WISHES FOR YOU AND FOR THE VALIANT PEOPLE OF
THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

SINCERELY,

GERALD R. FORD END TEXT.

SIGNED ORIGINAL BEING POUCHED. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, POLICIES, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE236790
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740307-0016
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741013/aaaaakfu.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <12 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT THIEU THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER TO
TAGS: MASS, VS, US, (FORD, GERALD R), (THIEU)
To: SAIGON
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005